



AmeriCorps*State Program

Request for Applications

Project Period 2016-2017

State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Public Health
Office of Preparedness & Response
Fiscal Year 2017



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PART I

A. Date of Issuance

August 18, 2015

B. Issuing Organizational Unit

Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)
Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service
Office of Preparedness & Response
Division of Disaster Planning & Readiness
422 South 5th Street, 1st Floor
Springfield, IL 62701

Contact Person:

Scott McFarland, Executive Director
Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service
422 South 5th Street, 1st Floor
Springfield, IL 62701
217-524-2243
Scott.McFarland@illinois.gov

C. RFA Availability

Copies of this RFA may be downloaded from Serve Illinois website at www.Serve.Illinois.gov.

D. Bidders' Conferences

Bidders' Conference information is listed below. Applicants are **required** to attend one of the scheduled conferences during one of the designated time. Proposals **will not be considered** from applicants that did not attend one of the four conferences listed below. Anyone requiring an interpreter, or other special accommodation(s), should notify the Department's contact person as listed above under the heading, "Contact Person."



October 5, 2015

1pm – 4pm
Metcalf Federal Building
GSA Conference Room – 3rd Floor
77 W Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604

October 6, 2015

1pm – 4pm
John Wood Community College
Paul Heath Community Education and Fine Arts Center (D Building)
1301 S. 48th St., Quincy, IL 62305
(Call 217-641-1961 for questions)

October 13, 2015

1pm – 4pm
Carle Forum Building
Pollard Auditorium
602 W University Ave, Urbana, IL
(Free Parking is available at the Champaign Country Fairground with shuttle service to the forum. Call 217-722-6370 for questions)

October 15, 2015

1pm – 4pm
John A. Logan College
Conference Center (Building F), Room F119
700 Logan College Rd., Carterville, IL

October 19, 2015

1pm – 4pm
Online Webinar
To connect to the webinar go to
<https://connect17.uc.att.com/stateofil/meet/?ExEventID=84037150212&CT=M>
Call in: 888-494-4032 Passcode: 4037150212#

Questions and responses will be addressed at the Bidder's Conferences. While questions may be answered during the conference, only questions and responses provided in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) posted on the website will serve as official responses. The FAQs will be periodically posted to the Serve Illinois website. Applicants will need to monitor the Serve Illinois website to obtain updates. The FAQ posted will serve as valid and official responses.

It is recommended that attendees have a copy of this RFA during the Grants Bidders' Conference.

E. Proposal Submission – eGrants

All proposals must be submitted via eGrants, Applicants must submit their applications electronically via the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) web-based system, eGrants no later than 5:00 pm CST on Friday, December 4, 2015. Because it is a unique system, it is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word document and copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants.

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask_eg if a problem arises while creating an account or while preparing or submitting an application in eGrants.

National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET. The two Fridays and weekends prior to the application deadline (January 9-11 and 16-19) the Hotline will be open from 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. ET to assist applicants. If you contact the Hotline, be prepared to provide the application ID, organization name, and the Notice to which your organization is applying.



If technical issues prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline prior to the deadline to explain the technical issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants and notify Serve Illinois of the issue prior to the deadline. An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application due date. Incomplete applications will not be considered. All additional required documents should include the applicant organization name and Application ID number at the top of the page and are due by the application deadline at DPH.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov. Please note that you should not send documents to the cns.gov email listed in the federal NOFO. Serve Illinois will submit your documents to them at a later date.

Additional documents may include (if applicable): letter(s) of support for the Governor/Mayor Initiative, evaluation reports, letters from the consortium members for Multi-focused intermediaries, and up to two evaluation briefs, reports, and/or peer reviewed articles if the applicant has a moderate or strong evidence base.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application and include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via eGrants to the address provided in Section IX. Agency Contacts, via overnight carrier. All deadlines and requirements in this Notice apply to hard copy applications. CNCS does not accept applications submitted via fax or email.

F. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Applications must include a DUNS number and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The website indicates a 48-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, CNCS suggests registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants must be registered with the Systems for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with SAM. To register online go to <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

G. Application Fields and Page Limits

In eGrants, applicants will enter text in the following fields

- Executive Summary
- Program Design
- Organizational Capability
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- Evaluation Plan

Applications may not exceed 15 pages for the Narratives (18 pages for Multi-Focus Intermediaries), including the Executive Summary and SF 424 Facesheet, as the pages print out from eGrants. CNCS

strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the “Review and Submit” page prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit. This limit does not include the narrative portion of the evaluation plan or the logic model, budget, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable.

The Logic Model may not exceed more than three pages when printed from the application. Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limit in the printed report, even if eGrants allows an applicant to enter and submit text over the limit. Do not submit other items not requested in the *Notice* or Application Instructions. Serve Illinois and CNCS will not review or return them.

Do not submit supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in these application instructions. Neither CNCS nor Serve Illinois will review or return them.

H. Other Submission Requirements

All organizations applying for state funds must submit one (1) copy of their most recent audited financial statements as part of their proposal. Serve Illinois will use the audit to ascertain the fiscal health of applicants. While the audit will not be scored as part of the review, Serve Illinois reserves the right to use information in the audit to assist in the final recommendation for funding. Applicants are expected to demonstrate through their audits a strong financial position and ability to obtain funding outside of the public sector. Units of government such as cities, counties, schools, and health departments, etc. **do not** need to submit an audit.

Evaluation

Submit any completed evaluation plan or report as described in Part II, Section E found below. In eGrants select Evaluation and select “Sent” once you have submitted a completed evaluation plan or report. If an evaluation is required, you must submit a copy at the time of application even if you think CNCS or Serve Illinois may already have it on file.

Indirect Cost Rate Approval Letter

If you have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost (IDC) rate and choose to use it, please submit a copy of the approval letter.

Delinquent of Federal Debt

Any applicant that checks Yes to the question on federal debt delinquency must submit a complete explanation.

Audit

Your agency’s most recent audit must be submitted.

The above documents (if applicable) must be submitted in person or by certified U.S.P.S. mail, Fed Ex or UPS by or before 5:00 pm CST on Friday, December 4, 2015 Please include a copy of the SF-424 Facesheet with your attachments for identification purposes. Please send one copy of these documents to the attention of:

Scott McFarland, Executive Director



Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service
422 South 5th Street, 1st Floor
Springfield, IL 62701
217-524-2243
DPH.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov

I. Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to apply: public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and federally recognized Indian Tribes. Receiving funding previously from CNCS, Serve Illinois, or another Federal agency is not a prerequisite to apply under this Notice.

Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this Notice. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501 (c)(4) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. § 501 (c)(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

Program Types:

To Which Program Should I Apply? The purpose of this document is to provide interested parties with information to enable them to prepare and submit a proposal for AmeriCorps*State funding for the creation, expansion, or enhancement of programs that meet the requirements of the AmeriCorps national service program. The State as represented by Serve Illinois intends to use the results of this process to award grant agreements for AmeriCorps*State national service programs beginning in Fiscal Year 2017. These programs include AmeriCorps*State Competitive grants, AmeriCorps*State Professional Corps grants, Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed-Amount grants, and AmeriCorps*State formula grants.

Serve Illinois will not provide more than one grant for the same project in one fiscal year. **Serve Illinois will not consider a proposal with less than eight MSY. Only programs with 20 or more MSY will be considered for the AmeriCorps*State Competitive grant.**

AmeriCorps*State Competitive grants: AmeriCorps*State Competitive applications are submitted to Serve Illinois through this RFA process. Applications are reviewed and selected at the state level to compete in a national competition held by CNCS. Serve Illinois forwards the proposals that it feels meets the following criteria. The proposals not funded by CNCS are returned back to the state for further consideration in the AmeriCorps* State Formula grant funding. The following criterion is used to determine potential applicants: 1) selection of CNCS Tier Priorities (Focus Areas and Performance Measures- Part II, Section C), 2) previous programmatic /administrative/ fiscal performance, 3) grant adequacy, 4) slot make up (number of full-time, part-time, reduced-time, etc.), and 5) progress towards outcomes.

Professional Corps grants: Professional Corps grants are awarded to organizations that propose to programs place AmeriCorps Members as teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, or other professionals in communities where there are an inadequate number of such professionals. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for a portion of program costs, and use their own or other resources to pay the members' living allowance and additional member costs.



An organization proposing a Professional Corps program that operates in more than one state applies directly to CNCS. If you are such a program, please visit www.Nationalservice.gov for more information. A Professional Corps program that will operate only in Illinois applies for a state competitive grant through an application submitted to Serve Illinois through this RFA process.

Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed-Amount grants: Applicants are eligible to apply for a small fixed-amount grant and use their own or other resources for the members' living allowance and program costs. Applicants can apply for up to \$800 per member service year (MSY). There is no match requirement for EAP grants. may enroll full-time and less-than-full-time members. These grants are applied for through Serve Illinois and forwarded to CNCS for review and consideration.

AmeriCorps*State Formula grants: AmeriCorps*State Formula grants are those applications funded directly by the State of Illinois and not directly by CNCS in the competitive grant cycle. The State of Illinois receives an annual formula allocation of funds, slots, and MSYs from CNCS. Serve Illinois determines which applicants will be awarded formula grants in the State of Illinois.

General Summary				
Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement		Fixed Amount	
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Professional Corps	EAP	Professional Corps
Maximum Cost per MSY	\$13,730	Up to \$1,000*	\$800	Up to \$1,000*
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	All	All	All	Full-Time Only
Budget Submission Required	Yes		No	Yes, if requesting operating funds
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSY	No		Yes	
Special Requirements	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in the budget.	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. No CNCS funds may be used to pay member living allowance or salary.
Match Requirements	Yes	Yes; Living allowance or salary paid to members may not be counted toward the match requirement.	No, but organizations must raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.	
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes		No	
Available to New Applicants	Yes			

*CNCS's assumption is that Professional Corps will be covering the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non-CNCS funds and thus will not be requesting operating funds as part of their applications. CNCS will consider requests for operating funds of up to \$1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate in its narrative and supporting budget materials significant organizational financial need and substantial challenges to raising non-CNCS resources.

J. Questions and Answers

Each applicant must have access to the Internet. Serve Illinois' website will contain information regarding the RFA. It is the responsibility of each applicant to monitor that website and comply with any instructions or requirements relating to the RFA. Questions regarding this RFA can be sent via email to: DPH.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov. It is critical that you monitor the Serve Illinois website for all updates. Failure to update your application in accordance with any updates to the RFA will impact your application's final score and funding determination.

All questions with their respective answers will be posted on the Serve Illinois website at www.Serve.Illinois.gov. The FAQs will be posted with the AmeriCorps*State RFA. The information in the FAQ section may be updated periodically, so applicants are encouraged to check it frequently. Only written answers posted on the website will be considered valid and official. Note: The final deadline to submit any written questions regarding the AmeriCorps Program RFA is **Friday, November 13, 2015**.

K. Award Notification

It is anticipated that applicants will receive notification by Serve Illinois regarding submission of their proposals to CNCS for the AmeriCorps*State Competitive funding consideration in December, 2015. Programs selected for Competitive funding consideration may be asked to amend their application in December or early January to comply with submission requirements. Failure to amend may remove the program from Competitive consideration. The programs original unamended application will be reviewed for Formula funding.

AmeriCorps*State Competitive and Formula funding award notifications are anticipated to be made in June, 2015. Successful applicants will be notified in writing. A Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) is not equivalent to an agreement with the IDPH to commence providing service. Successful applicants will receive a grant agreement thereto for their signature and return. The release of this RFA does not obligate the IDPH to make an award. All grants are subject to federal appropriation.

L. Review Panel

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel established by Serve Illinois and IDPH. Reviewers will score applications independently, and all applications will be reviewed by at least two people. Scoring will be on a 100 point scale. The average of all review scores will be the final overall score for the application.

In evaluating your application for funding, reviewers will assess your program design, organizational capability, and the program's cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. The weights assigned to each category and, if applicable, sub-category, are listed in the chart below.

Basic Selection Criteria: Categories, Sub-Categories, and Respective Weights

Category	Percentage
Program Design	50%
Organizational Capability	25%
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	25%

NOTE: Please see the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2522.420–2522.448, for additional detail regarding these criteria and what reviewers will assess in each category. Section 2522.450 of the AmeriCorps regulations addresses types of programs or program models that may receive special

consideration in the selection process. Section 2522.455 addresses how you can find out about additional priorities governing the selection process. Section 2522.470 addresses other factors or information CNCS may consider in making final decisions.

While recommendations of the review panel will be a key factor in the funding decisions, Serve Illinois and IDPH consider the findings of the review panel to be non-binding recommendations. Serve Illinois maintains final authority over funding decisions and reserves the right to consider factors other than the applicant's final score in determining final grant recommendations in order to maintain a diverse portfolio. Such factors may include, but are not limited to; Serve Illinois's identified priority areas detailed in Part II, Section C, past performance, and/or financial standing with the state.

M. Post-Submission Presentation to Serve Illinois

Applicants may be requested to make a presentation on their proposal to Serve Illinois or to an ad hoc selection committee of Serve Illinois, including Commissioners and staff.

N. Project/Award Period

Awards will be made for 18 months. AmeriCorps Members may not begin service until CNCS and the IDPH issues the grant award and grant agreement. A program may not certify hours a member performs prior to the award being issued. Programming will begin in either July or August 2016.

O. Withdrawal Disclaimer

IDPH or Serve Illinois may withdraw this RFA at any time prior to the actual time a fully executed agreement is filed with the State of Illinois Comptroller's Office.

P. Modifications to Proposals by Applicants

Once you have submitted your proposal in eGrants, you will not be able to make modifications to it. To make a modification to a proposal after it has been submitted, the applicant must contact the individual listed under "Contact Person" in Section 'B' above. A request to modify a proposal will only be accepted prior to the submission deadline of **5:00 pm CST on Friday, December 4, 2015.**

Q. Modifications to RFA by IDPH

After the Bidder's Conferences, additional clarification regarding the RFA may be posted. It is the responsibility of each applicant to monitor the Serve Illinois website for any updates pertaining to the RFA. If it becomes necessary or appropriate to change any part of the RFA, a notice of the modification to the RFA will be available from the Serve Illinois website at www.Serve.Illinois.gov and it will be issued to all known potential applicants. In case of such an unforeseen event, Serve Illinois will issue detailed instructions for how to proceed.

R. Clarifications, Negotiations, or Discussions Initiated by Serve Illinois

Serve Illinois may contact any applicant prior to the final award for the following purposes:

- 1) As part of the CNCS and Serve Illinois review process, Serve Illinois may request an applicant to clarify its proposal. An applicant may not be allowed to materially change its proposal in response to a request for clarification.
- 2) Discussions may be held to promote understanding of CNCS's requirements, Serve Illinois' priorities and the applicant's proposal, and to facilitate arriving at an agreement that will be most advantageous to the State considering cost and other evaluation factors set forth in the RFA.

- 3) When IDPH or Serve Illinois knows or has reason to conclude that a mistake has been made, either party may ask the applicant to confirm the information. Situations in which confirmation should be requested include obvious or apparent errors on the face of the document or a cost unreasonably lower than the cost others submitted, or if the cost is considerably higher than what is currently paid for this type of service.

S. Late Proposals/Responses

Late proposals will not be reviewed or considered and will be automatically disqualified. Serve Illinois will notify all Applicants whose proposals will not be considered due to lateness or non-compliance with proposal requirements.

T. Objections

Applicants who object to any provision of this RFA, who believe their proposal was improperly rejected, or who believe that the selected proposal(s) is/are not in the best interest of CNCS, IDPH, or Serve Illinois, may submit a written protest regarding Serve Illinois' action. IDPH will consider all such written protests that are submitted according to the time periods specified below. IDPH will investigate all allegations and issue a written response. The decision of IDPH in response to a protest is final.

Protests must be in writing and will be considered filed when physically received by IDPH at the following address:

Illinois Department of Public Health
Office of Preparedness and Response
422 S 5th St
Springfield, IL 62701
ATTENTION: Winfred Rawls

Protests must be filed within seven (7) calendar days after the Protestor knows or should have known of the facts giving rise to the protest.

Protests regarding RFA specifications must be filed within seven (7) calendar days after the date the RFA was issued and, in any event must be filed before the date for opening the proposals.

If a protest is received, any award made will not be considered final until the protest is resolved.

U. Public Information

All information submitted pursuant to this RFA is subject to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. The successful applicant must recognize and accept that any material marked proprietary or confidential that must be made a part of the contract may be considered open for public inspection. Cost information submitted by the successful applicant shall be considered public.

For proposals that are not selected for funding, only the list of those submitting proposals/responses shall be considered public, not the applications.



All questions regarding the Illinois Freedom of Information Act should be directed to:

Illinois Department of Public Health
Freedom of Information Officer
535 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761-0001
DPH.FOIA@illinois.gov
Fax: 217-557-3497

V. Grant Agreement

The legal agreement between IDPH and the successful applicants will be in the form and format prescribed by IDPH.

W. Payment Method

Payments to successful programs shall be made on a reimbursement basis. Expenditures must be consistent with the agency's approved budget on file with Serve Illinois. Monthly expense reports are required and must be submitted in IDPH's EGrAMS system. Unexpended funds are not carried over to the following grant year.

X. Reporting

Successful applicants are required to supply quarterly performance reports, monthly periodic expenditure reports (PER), semi-annual federal financial reports, a project close-out, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations. Information on performance measurement can be found in 45 CFR §2522.500-2522.650. The requirements for evaluation are in §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740.

Y. Source of Funds

These funds will be available under the authority of CNCS.

Z. Amounts of Grants and Restrictions

The grant amount will vary by circumstance, need, and program model. The same project cannot be funded by multiple AmeriCorps grants. If you have more than one application pending before CNCS for the same project, you must state this fact in each application. You will be required to withdraw all but one if two or more are approved for funding.

AA. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

Grants under this program are subject to 2 CFR Part 200 and CNCS regulations issued to implement Part 200. Those regulations supersede and streamline requirements from OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A-110, and A-122 (which have been placed in OMB guidances); Circulars A-89, A-102, and A-133; and the guidance in Circular A-50 on Single Audit Act follow-up.

BB. Training and Technical Assistance

Programs must agree to receive consultation and technical assistance from Serve Illinois or authorized representatives of Serve Illinois. The program and collaborating partners will be required to be in attendance at site visits. Programs will be required to attend regular meetings, webinars, and training (at least two on-site per program year) as provided by Serve Illinois or a subcontractor of Serve Illinois, and should budget accordingly.



CC. Additional Information

IDPH and/or Serve Illinois reserve the right to request additional information that could assist with its award decision. Applicants are expected to provide the additional information within a reasonable period of time. Failure to provide the information could result in the rejection of the proposal.

DD. Background Checks

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award.

Unless CNCS has provided a recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients must perform the following checks–

All award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW); *and*
2. *Either*
 - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work *or*
 - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers *with recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW; *and*
2. *Both*
 - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
 - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

See 45 C.F.R. § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check> for complete information and FAQs. Vendor checks (checks performed by commercial vendors) are often noncompliant with these requirements. Inability of a grantee to demonstrate that they have conducted an NSOPW and other required criminal history checks, as specified in CNCS's regulations, may result in disallowance of all or part of the costs associated with noncompliance.

Illinois programs are also required to complete an Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS) check for all staff listed in Section 1 of their budget and all AmeriCorps Members.



EE. Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Mandate

Per the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA, 325 ILCS 5/4), mandated reporters are professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child maltreatment immediately when they have “reasonable cause to believe” that a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be an abused or neglected child” (ANCRA Sec.4). This is done by calling the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Hotline at 1-800-252-2873 or 1-800-25ABUSE. Programs funded through this grant opportunity must review ANCRA and, where appropriate, have a written protocol for identifying and reporting suspected child maltreatment.

FF. Hiring and Employment Policy

It is the policy of Serve Illinois to encourage cultural diversity in the work environment and to promote AmeriCorps opportunities through its programs. Serve Illinois’ philosophy is that the program membership should appropriately reflect the populations to be served with special attention given to hiring individuals indigenous to those communities.

GG. Inclusion of People with Disabilities

Serve Illinois sets the expectation that grantees be inclusive in programming and service activities.

Inclusive service programs support opportunities for people with disabilities to actively take part in service activities with dignity in an atmosphere that promotes physical, social and psychological involvement of people with diverse experiences and skill levels. Programs are required to be inclusive as evidenced by:

- Outreach and recruitment of people with disabilities in service projects and as members in service,
- Providing training to all members regarding disability awareness (etiquette, communication, etc.),
- Knowledge and implementation of the accommodation process provided to all members,
- Anonymous/confidential tracking of members with disabilities (conducted as requested by Commission staff),
- Ensuring trainings and events are held in accessible locations, and include accessible materials, as needed; and
- Offering reasonable accommodations to members when requested.

HH. Program Participation

Successful applicants will be required to participate in a number of meetings throughout the grant period, including “National Service Recognition Day” activities, three (3) national days of service (e.g., Martin Luther King Day, AmeriCorps Week, 9/11 Day of Service) and other programmatic-related trainings or events (e.g., Program Directors’ Training).

All AmeriCorps programs are required to recruit additional volunteers to work alongside the AmeriCorps Members. Additionally, program will assist Serve Illinois in strengthening the volunteer connector infrastructure of the state by partnering with existing volunteer connector organizations, and when existing organizations don’t exist in a service area, working to develop new volunteer connector organizations.

Successful applicants will also be required to identify one to two AmeriCorps Member(s) to participate in Illinois Disaster Corps. Disaster Corps is a composite team of AmeriCorps programs and Senior Corps programs that allow Members to be deployed for disaster operations within Illinois. The Disaster Corps will have a trained group of members to provide services that will



include, but not be limited to, disaster volunteer coordination, debris removal, disaster damage assessment, and disaster preparedness activities such as sandbagging. However, the primary focus of the group will be volunteer management.

Members of the Disaster Corps will serve the mission of their hosting program until a region in Illinois is affected by a disaster. The members of Disaster Corps will then make disaster response their primary function as a national service member and deploy to the site of the disaster within 24 hours of request. Time spent with Disaster Corps will count towards the Member's service/training hours.

II. Education Award

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded with FY 2016 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust of \$5,775 for a year of full-time service, with correspondingly smaller awards for less than full-time service. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award.

SEGAL EDUCATION AWARD AMOUNTS		
Participation Type	Minimum # of Hours	Amount
Full-Time	1700	\$ 5,775.00
Half-Time	900	\$ 2,887.50
Reduced Half-Time	675	\$ 2,199.92
Quarter-Time	450	\$ 1,527.45
Minimum Time and Summer Associate	300	\$ 1,221.96

Part II

A. Serve Illinois: A History and Overview

Serve Illinois exists to fulfill a federal mandate requiring states to establish a service commission in order to receive funding through CNCS. Appointed by the Governor, the 40 Illinois Commissioners (25 voting and 15 non-voting) represent leaders in labor, education, public health, not-for-profit entities, business, volunteerism, national service, youth, and seniors.

Serve Illinois was formed in 1979 as the Illinois Office of Voluntary Citizens Participation with a five-year grant from ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer organization. In 1985, it became the Governor's Office of Voluntary Action. In 1991, it was transferred to the Lieutenant Governor's Office and was merged with the Senior Action Committee in the Office of Volunteer and Senior Action.

In September 1993, the federal "National Community Service Trust Act" was signed into law that called for each state to establish a state commission to administer the new AmeriCorps program. As a result, in July 1994, the Illinois State Legislature created the Lieutenant Governor's Commission on Community Service, replacing the Office of Volunteer and Senior Action.

In 1998, Serve Illinois moved to the Illinois Department of Human Services and legislation enacted in 2000 (20 ILCS 710, Chapter 1278, paragraphs 3800 to 3806) changed the name to the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service and charged Serve Illinois to:

- 1) promote and support community service in public and private programs to meet the needs of Illinois citizens;
- 2) stimulate new volunteerism and community service initiatives and partnerships; and,
- 3) serve as a resource and advocate within the Department of Human Services for community service agencies, volunteers, and programs which utilize State and private volunteers.

In 2007, the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service adopted the title of the "Serve Illinois Commission."

In 2014, Serve Illinois was moved from the Department of Human Services to the Illinois Department of Public Health in the Office of Preparedness and Response.

In partnership with the IDPH, Serve Illinois oversees all aspects of program administration and training for the AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps provides trained, dedicated people to help non-profit organizations accomplish their missions and to make more effective use of volunteers. AmeriCorps members assist in meeting locally identified community-based needs.

B. About CNCS and AmeriCorps

For more than twenty years, through its Senior Corps and AmeriCorps programs, CNCS has mobilized a new generation of engaged citizens. This year alone, more than 1.8 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds will serve through these programs. They will help thousands of national and community non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies meet local needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other critical areas.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations to recruit, train, and manage AmeriCorps members who address community needs. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. Members may receive a living



allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service members receive an education award from the National Service Trust.

Roughly three quarters of all AmeriCorps grant funding are directed to Governor-appointed state service commissions, which award sub-grants to organizations in their states. These organizations recruit AmeriCorps members to respond to local needs. CNCS distributes most of the remainder of the grant funding directly to organizations operating in more than one state.

C. CNCS Focus Areas and Commission Priorities

In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following focus areas:

Disaster Services

Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters. Grantees also have the ability to respond to national disasters under CNCS cooperative agreements and FEMA mission assignments.

Economic Opportunity

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people; help economically disadvantaged people, including youth identified in My Brother's Keeper to have improved access to services that enhance financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing; and/or have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

Education

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children; improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or support economically disadvantaged students prepare for success in post-secondary educational institutions.

Environmental Stewardship

Grants will provide support for increased individual behavioral change leading to increased energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements particularly for economically disadvantaged households and communities. Grant activities will decrease energy and water consumption; improve at-risk ecosystems; increase behavioral changes that lead directly to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems; and/or increase green training opportunities that may lead to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems.

Healthy Futures

Grants will provide support for activities that will improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.

Veterans and Military Families

Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength;

increase the number of veterans, military service members, and their families served by CNCS-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.

2016 AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in:

- Disaster Services - improving community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation
- Economic Opportunity - increasing economic opportunities for communities, specifically opportunity youth (see Glossary), both as the population served and as AmeriCorps members.
- Education - improving student academic performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics (STEM) or addressing student and school needs through School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming (see Glossary and Appendix)
- Environment - 21st Century Service Corps (see Glossary)
- Veterans and Military Families -- positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength
- Governor and Mayor Initiatives (see Glossary)
- Programming that supports My Brother's Keeper (see Glossary)
- Multi-focus intermediaries that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure. i.e. rural and other underserved communities. (see Glossary)
- Safer communities - activities that focus on public safety and preventing and mitigating civil unrest e.g., summer programming or engaging communities that are part of The National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention.

In order to receive priority consideration, applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high quality program design. Responses that propose programs for the purpose of receiving priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

Next Gen AmeriCorps

Depending on overall funding available, CNCS is inviting applicants to propose the Next Generation AmeriCorps or Next Gen AmeriCorps. The importance of service remains even within tight fiscal constraints we face as a nation. The goal of Next Gen AmeriCorps is to use innovative strategies to offer the same service opportunities but at a more efficient cost to the government. To participate, applicants must have a cost per member that is lower than \$10,000 per year per full time member using CNCS funding. CNCS is looking for innovative approaches and models to implement, for example: locating operations in Promise Zones, areas that meet Promise Zone criteria, or that demonstrate other indicators of severe need.

Congress set a goal that 10 percent of AmeriCorps funding should support encore service programs that engage a significant number of participants age 55 or older. CNCS seeks to meet that target in this competition and encourages encore programs to apply. Encore will provide an opportunity for current evidence-based Senior Corps Foster Grandparents Program and Senior Companion Program grantees to expand their programs through AmeriCorps funding.

National Performance Measures

The Serve America Act (SAA) emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set

of issue areas. CNCS's five-year Strategic Plan establishes an ambitious set of objectives that guided the development of 16 agency-wide Priority Performance Measures. CNCS expects organizations to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy that relies on both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions [<http://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/main-menu/2014/2015-performance-measures-instructions>].

All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary service activity. CNCS does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. CNCS values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures. As described in the Application Instructions, applicants must include all their information about their proposed performances measure in the Performance Measure section of the applications in eGrants (CNCS's web-based grants management system). All information requested in the National Performance Measure Instructions must be included in the text of the performance measures themselves, and it must be evident in the performance measure text that all definitions and requirements outlined in the National Performance Measures Instructions and NOFO FAQs are met. Providing performance measures information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the Performance Measures section of the application in eGrants.

Serve Illinois Commission Priorities

Additionally, in Illinois, special consideration will be given to proposals that represent Serve Illinois's identified priorities. Those priorities are as follows:

- 1) Focus Areas (see below)
- 2) Geography
- 3) Target Populations: Veterans, Service Members, Veterans and Military Families, and People with Disabilities

1. Focus Areas

In addition to CNCS Focus Areas, Serve Illinois also seeks to focus on the following areas:

- Intergenerational Initiatives (not senior citizen serving senior citizen)
- Violence Prevention and Intervention
- Volunteer Connectors

2. Geography

Serve Illinois will give special consideration to programs whose service sites are located in geographic regions within Illinois that are under served by current Commission funded programs.

3. Target Populations

Serve Illinois will give special consideration to programs that target Veterans, Service Members, Veterans and Military Families, At-Risk Youth in High-crime Areas, and People with Disabilities.

D. Regulations

Please be aware that this Request for Applications (RFA) modifies the national instructions of CNCS's *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity* (NOFO) and deadlines to address specific needs and concerns in the State of Illinois. It takes precedence over the application instructions released by CNCS. We strongly recommend that you review the regulations cited below as well as the

Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and these full instructions before applying.

Program requirements, including the criteria against which applications will be assessed are located in the new AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520 -2550. Additional criteria regarding the specific needs and concerns of the State of Illinois may be added. The full regulations are available online at **www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr**. Relevant federal statutes governing the design and implementation of AmeriCorps programming include:

Table 1: Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Topics	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§2522.400-2522.475

If there is any inconsistency between the AmeriCorps regulations, CNCS’s *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity*, and the Application Instructions, the order of precedence is as follows:

1. The AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§ 2520-2550;
2. Serve Illinois’s Request for Applications;
3. CNCS’s *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity*.

E. Application Due Date

All proposals must be submitted via eGrants. Proposals must be finalized in the system no later than **5:00 pm CST on Friday, December 4, 2015**. The deadline will be strictly enforced without exception.

If you need assistance in establishing an eGrants account or navigating the system, please contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask> eg. If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application into the system by the established deadline, Serve Illinois may consider an application that is submitted via hard copy by the established deadline, but only if the applicant submits the following information: a letter and documentation. The letter should outline the extenuating circumstance which caused the delay with submission, detailed information regarding your correspondence with the National Service Hotline, and your completed application in a pdf format. The letter and completed application must be emailed to the grant contact email, found under Part One, Section B.

Organizations will be given the information necessary to access to the eGrants system after the Grants Bidders’ Conferences (Section I, Part D, page 4) and may begin uploading their proposal immediately following that notification. It is recommended that you begin work on your grant application prior to receiving the online access information, and that you begin entering your proposal into the system as early as possible to minimize any possibility of delays due to technical difficulties. All applicants should submit their proposals as “Competitive” applications.



F. Tips for Using eGrants

The following steps will make the use of eGrants simpler and minimize obstacles:

- 1) Create your account and begin your application at least three weeks, or more, prior to the deadline. This will allow you time to address technical issues prior to the deadline.
- 2) Prepare and save your application as a word processing document prior to inputting it into the system. Copy and paste the contents of this document into the relevant fields.
- 3) Adhere to all the character limits indicated in the application instructions. Characters include all the letters, punctuation, and spaces in your document. Your word processing software should provide you a character count.
- 4) Use only uppercase letters for all section headings and other information you would like to highlight in your narrative. Bold face, bullets, underlines, or other types of formatting, charts, diagrams, and tables will not copy into the systems. Do not use any of these in your application.

G. Application Instructions for eGrants

Additional eGrants application instructions are available from CNCS. The document is available at Serve.Illinois.Gov

Application Fields

A. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do not deviate from the template below.

The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [what the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing.]

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)]. The CNCS investment of \$[amount of request] will be matched with \$[amount of projected match], \$[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.*

**If the program is not operating in a CNCS' focus area, omit this sentence.*

Fixed Amount grant applicants (EAP, Fulltime Fixed, and AmeriCorps Partnership Challenge) should list their Other Revenue (see Glossary) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still must raise significant additional resources to operate the program. CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on www.nationalservice.gov in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

B. Program Design (50 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value. School Turnaround AmeriCorps applicants should respond to the additional criteria in the Glossary and Appendix.



1. Problem/Need (9 points)

- The community problem/need is clearly defined and aligns with the proposed intervention.
- The community problem/need is prevalent and severe in communities where members will serve and has been well documented with relevant data.

2. Theory of Change and Logic Model (13 points)

- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change. The theory of change should be either evidence-informed or evidence-based, meaning that the proposed intervention is guided by the best available research evidence that supports its effectiveness in the evidence section.
- The proposed outcomes represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem/need identified by the applicant.
- The applicant's AmeriCorps members will produce significant and unique contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The logic model shall depict:

- A summary of the community problem/need outlined in the narrative.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including:
 - Number of locations or sites in which members will provide services
 - Number of AmeriCorps members that will deliver the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
 - The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
 - The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
 - The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served.) Identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators
- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention.

Programs may include short, medium, or long-term outcomes in the logic model. While performance measure outcomes should be consistent with the program's theory of change, programs are not required to measure all outcomes that are included in the logic model. The Logic Model should identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic model content that exceeds the three pages will not be reviewed.

3. Evidence Base (12 points)

Applicants will be awarded up to 12 points for providing evidence that their proposed intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the logic model. Applicants shall provide a description of up to two research studies or evaluations that provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the target population and community problem, and should describe how this evidence places them in the

highest evidence tier for which they are eligible. Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements for each tier of evidence. More points are awarded for higher tiers of evidence.

Applicants requesting consideration for the moderate and strong evidence levels should reference the Submission of Additional Documents section for guidance on the submission of evaluation studies. All applicants must include as much detailed information as possible in the Evidence section of the application. Applicants are advised to focus on presenting high-quality evidence from two of the strongest and most relevant studies. Studies must be evaluations of specific programs or interventions. Research that does not focus on a specific program or intervention, but rather focuses on a broader issue area or population, will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

All applicants must include a description of up to two research studies or evaluations in order to earn points, including the following information:

- 1) The date of the research or evaluation was completed, and the time period for which the intervention was examined
- 2) A description of the target population studied (e.g. the demographics)
- 3) The methodology used in the study (e.g.; outcome study, random assignment, regression discontinuity design, or propensity score matching)
- 4) A description of the data, data source, and data collection methods
- 5) The outcomes or impacts examined and the study findings
- 6) The strength of the findings (e.g. confidence level, statistical power of the study design and statistical significance of findings).

Reviewers will examine the descriptions (and attached studies if relevant) using the following criteria:

- a) How closely the intervention evaluated in the studies matches the one proposed by the applicant;
- b) The methodological quality and rigor of the studies presented (e.g., sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, use of control or equivalent comparison groups, baseline equivalence and study attrition, etc.);
- c) Strength and consistency of the findings, with preference given to findings that show a meaningful and persistent positive effect on participants demonstrated with confidence levels;
- d) The date of the study, with a preference towards studies that have been conducted within the last six years.

If the evidence submitted as part of this application does not describe a well-designed and well-implemented evaluation, the applicant will be considered for a lower tier of evidence and related point values.

Requirements associated with the five evidence tiers are described next.

No evidence (0 points) means that the applicant has not provided evidence that they have systematically collected any qualitative or quantitative data to date.

Pre-preliminary evidence (1-2 points) means the applicant has demonstrated data collection experience testing or tracking at least one aspect of its logic model. For example, the applicant has collected systemic and accurate data on one or more of the following: the community need the proposed intervention will address, the program intervention's activities and services delivered, participation in the intervention by the target population, and/or participant outcomes (for example, performance

measurement data or a process evaluation assessing implementation of the intervention.) The data collection process and results must be described fully and the applicant should explain the link between data collection and the relevant component(s) of its logic model. Evidence for the pre-preliminary tier should be described in the Evidence section of the application but does not require submission of supplemental documentation.

Preliminary evidence (3-6 points) means the applicant has described up to two outcome studies about the intervention that yielded promising results for the proposed intervention or a similar intervention that the applicant will replicate with fidelity to the evaluated program model. The ways to demonstrate preliminary level of evidence are as follows:

- The applicant must describe at least one outcome study that was conducted of their own intervention. This must include a detailed description of the outcome study data from pre and post-tests without a comparison group or post-test comparison between intervention and comparison groups. An outcome study includes data beyond that which is collected as part of routine performance measurement. This description should explain whether the outcome study was conducted internally by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant.

OR

- The applicant must describe at least one random control trial study or quasi-experimental evaluation (e.g. propensity score matching) that found positive results for the same intervention that the applicant plans to replicate. The description should include details about how the intervention studied and the applicant's proposed approach are the same and how the applicant will replicate the intervention with fidelity to the program model. The study must have been conducted by an entity external to the organization whose program was studied.

OR

- The applicant may submit evidence from both bullets listed above. In this case, the applicant must provide data from an outcome study of an intervention it has previously implemented (see above) and also proposes to modify their program by replicating another random control trial study or quasi-experimental evaluation. Applicants should describe their previous outcome study and should also describe and submit the study (ies) of the proposed evidence-based intervention.

For the purposes of this Notice, “replicate” means that the key elements of the applicant's intervention are implemented as the evidence-based program model describes (e.g., in terms of content or curriculum, delivery process, and target population), and the applicant's adaptations are relatively minor. For example, an applicant implementing an intervention using certified teachers to administer the curriculum would not be considered replicating that program with fidelity if it replaces teachers with AmeriCorps members who are not certified teachers, because the documented success of the intervention relied on the specialization of certified teachers.

Moderate evidence (7-9 points) means the applicant has submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented studies that evaluated the same intervention described in this application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. Evidence of effectiveness (or positive findings) is determined using experimental design

evaluations (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT)) or quasi-experimental design evaluations (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. The ability to generalize the findings from the RCT or QED beyond the study context may be limited (e.g., single-site). The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Applicants classifying their evidence as **Moderate** must submit up to two evaluation reports from external sources or evaluations published in peer-reviewed articles as separate attachments.

Current CNCS grantees are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two studies required for Moderate evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three studies will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not a current grantee, then more than two studies will not be considered.

Strong evidence (10-12 points) means the applicant has demonstrated that the intervention has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state-level (e.g., multi-site) using a well-designed and well-implemented QED or RCT. Alternatively, the proposed intervention's evidence may be based on multiple (up to two) well-designed and well-implemented QEDs or RCTs in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area. The overall pattern of study findings is consistently positive. Findings from the RCT or QED studies may be generalized beyond the study context. The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Applicants classifying their evidence as **Strong** must submit up to two evaluation reports from external sources or evaluations published in peer-reviewed articles as separate attachments.

Current CNCS grantees are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two studies required for Strong evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three studies will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not a current grantee, then more than two studies will not be considered.

4. Notice Priority (3 points)

- The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the 2016 AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined on page 3 and more fully described in the Glossary.
- The proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed on page 3 and in the Glossary.

5. Member Training (4 points)

- AmeriCorps members will receive high quality training to provide effective service.
- AmeriCorps members and volunteers will be aware of, and will adhere to AmeriCorps requirements including the rules regarding prohibited activities (see Glossary).

6. Member Supervision (3 points)

- AmeriCorps members will receive high quality guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.

- AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

7. Member Experience (3 points)

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills and experience as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
- AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences, including opportunities for reflection and connection to.
- the broader National Service network. The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.

8. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification (3 points)

- Members will know they are AmeriCorps members.
- Staff and community members where the members are serving will know they are AmeriCorps members.
- AmeriCorps members will be provided with and will wear service gear that prominently displays the AmeriCorps logo daily.

C. Organizational Capability (25 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

1. Organizational Background and Staffing (10 points)

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.
- The organization has adequate experience administering AmeriCorps grants or other federal grants effectively.
- The organization has sufficiently engaged community members and partner organizations in planning and implementing its intervention.

As documentation of community support and commitment to the program please procure, keep on file, but do not submit to CNCS, letter(s) from the applicant's most significant community partner(s). The letter(s) should include what the partner(s) see as the benefit to the community provided by the applicant's AmeriCorps members and what activities would not happen without the AmeriCorps members.

2. Compliance and Accountability (15 points)

- The applicant's organization, in implementation and management of its AmeriCorps program, will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- The applicant will hold itself, subgrantees, and service site locations (if applicable) accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.
- The organization will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities at the grantee, subgrantee, and service site locations (if applicable).
- The AmeriCorps members service will not duplicate, displace, or supplant volunteers, staff and/or interns.

D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

1. Cost Effectiveness (18 points)

- The budget is sufficient to carry out the program effectively.*
 - The budget aligns with the applicant's narrative.*
 - The program design is cost effective and the benefits justify the cost.
 - The applicant has raised or describes an adequate plan to raise non-CNCS resources to fully support the program.
 - The applicant, if recompeting, has a lower cost per Member Service Year (MSY – see Glossary) than approved in previous grants, or provides a compelling rationale for the same or increased cost including why this increase could not be covered by the grantee share.
- Program costs not included in the formal budget, including for Fixed Price and Partnership Challenge grantees, must be described in this section in sufficient detail to allow reviewers to assess their sufficiency and alignment.

Having a low cost per Member Service Year (MSY) is a competitive advantage. New applicants that submit with a low cost per MSY and recompeting applicants that submit with a lower cost per MSY than previously funded may receive higher priority for funding. Applicants requesting a higher cost per MSY than funded in previous years must justify their requests. If an applicant requests above the maximum cost per MSY (see Section 5.C.), it must justify its request. Please note that such requests are rarely approved.

2. Budget Adequacy (7 points)

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget narrative (requested information in the budget screens):

- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash) and the sources of these commitments.

E. Evaluation Plan (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 percent)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please enter N/A in the Evaluation Plan field since it pertains only to recompeting grantees. If the applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time (see definition of "recompeting" below) the program must submit its evaluation plan in the Evaluation Plan field in eGrants. If the applicant is recompeting for a subsequent time, the program must submit its evaluation report via email to AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov by the application deadline, as well as an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the Evaluation Plan field in eGrants. Evaluations plans submitted outside of eGrants will not be reviewed.

Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following (see Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation, available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs->

evaluation-policies):

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
- Study components – a) a proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components; b) description of the sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures, and c) an analysis plan
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The estimated budget.

For more information about evaluation plans visit the CNCS Knowledge Network's Evaluation Resources: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR §2522.710:

- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and its average annual CNCS program grant is \$500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.
- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee whose average annual CNCS program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program Grantee, it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.

A program will be considered a recompeting application if it satisfies the CNCS definition of “same project” (see Glossary) and has been funded competitively for at least one complete three-year cycle. If the project satisfies the definition of same project and the applicant has completed one three-year cycle, it will be required to submit an evaluation plan. If the project satisfied the definition of same project and the applicant has completed two or more three-year cycles, the applicant will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan for the upcoming 3 year grant. If the project does not satisfy the definition of recompeting, it will not be required to submit an evaluation plan, or completed evaluation report.

The Evaluation Plan field of eGrants does not count towards the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit. Applicants should print out the plan to ensure the narrative does not exceed the character limits when entered in eGrants.

State/Territory subgrantees and/or National Direct Grantees with an average annual CNCS program grant of \$500,000 or more that are recompeting for funds are eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants. The request should clearly explain: (a) the

evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this Notice. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the competitive funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. More information on alternative evaluation approaches can be found at:

https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/files/guidance_for_grantees_approval_of_alternative_evaluation_approach.pdf.

If the request for the alternative evaluation approach and the evaluation plan itself will exceed the character limit of the evaluation summary or plan field in eGrants, the applicant should do the following:

- Enter the evaluation plan in the evaluation summary or plan filed in eGrants.
- Include a note in the evaluation summary or plan field stating that the applicant is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.
- Include the alternative evaluation approach at the END of the application narrative with the heading “REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH.” This section of the application narrative will not count against the page limit.

F. Amendment Justification (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

G. Clarification Information (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period.

H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in the application narratives in continuation requests.

Submission of Documents

The following documents (if applicable) must be submitted in person or by certified mail by 5:00pm CST Friday, December 4, 2015.

Audit

All organizations applying for state funds must provide their most recent A-133 audit, their organization’s financial audit, or other financial statements if they have not had a formal audit. (Please refer to Part I, Section AA, Federal Financial Management and Grant Administration Requirements for more information.) Serve Illinois will use the audit to ascertain the fiscal health of Applicants. While the audit will not be scored as part of the review, Serve Illinois reserves the right to use information in the audit to assist in the final recommendation for funding. Applicants are expected to demonstrate through their audits a strong financial position and ability to obtain funding outside of the public sector.

Please include a copy of the SF-424 Facesheet with your audit for identification purposes. Send these documents to the attention of:

Scott McFarland, Executive Director
Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service
422 South 5th Street, 1st Floor
Springfield, IL 62701
217-524-2243
DPH.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov

I. Budget

Overview of Key Statutory and Regulatory Budget Requirements

Before you complete the budget section, please review Sections §§ 2521.35–2521.90 of the AmeriCorps Regulations for match requirements, summarized below:

- Equipment costs must not exceed 10% of the total Corporation share.
- Administrative costs must utilize an indirect cost rate negotiated with a federal agency or IDPH.
- **Programs must budget one percent of the total federal share of the grant for Commission support services.**

Budget Sections I, II & III

Acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, private sector, and/or other funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.

Note: CNCS legislation permits the use of non-CNCS federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget. Please discuss your intention of using federal funds to match an AmeriCorps grant with the other agency prior to submitting your application. Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires that grantees that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS. If you use other federal funds as match, you must ensure you can meet the requirements and purpose of both grants. Grantees that use federal funds as match will be required to report the sources and amounts on the Federal Financial Report (FFR).

For Education Award Only Program (EAPs) Only: Budget and Match Requirements

EAP applicants may only request a fixed amount of funding per MSY (maximum of \$800). Therefore, you are not required to complete a detailed budget. Follow the instructions below to prepare your budget. Your budget worksheet is also below. Consult the most current *Notice* to determine the maximum amount of funding per MSY you may request. The matching requirements in 45 CFR §§ 2521.40– 2521.95 do not apply to EAP applicants.

Match Source Documentation

In Sections I, II, and III of the budget, you should clearly and specifically identify the source and total dollar amount of cash match from private, state and local and federal funds, and the source and total amounts of in-kind support. All acronyms should be defined the first time they are used to reference non-CNCS programs and sources.

Increasing Grantee Overall Share of Total Budgeted Costs

Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility

to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the total match ratio of 24% for first year programs is met. This matching requirement may be waived in limited circumstances. See 45 CFR §§ 2521.35– 2521.95 for the specific regulatory match and waiver requirements. **Programs that budget over the minimum match requirement will be held to the budgeted match amount.**

Competition	Match Requirement										
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
State Competitive and Formula Grants	Minimum Overall Share	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%
Education Award	Grantee pays all program costs over \$800 per MSY provided by CNCS. No budgeted match is required.										
Professional Corps Fixed-Amount Grants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the cost in the NOFO provided by CNCS.										

Preparing Your Budget

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in this section in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion.

Follow the detailed budget instructions in Attachment C to prepare your budget. We recommend that you prepare your budget in the same order as indicated in the Budget Worksheets in Attachments C and D.

As you enter your detailed budget information, eGrants will automatically populate a budget summary and budget narrative report. Prior to submission be sure to review the budget checklist (Attachment G) to ensure your budget is compliant. In addition, eGrants will perform a limited compliance check to validate the budget. If it finds any compliance issues you will receive a warning and/or error messages. You must resolve all errors before you can submit your budget.

As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and the requirements of the Omni Circular. Please refer to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200) for allowable, allocable, and reasonable cost information, as well as, audit requirements, including the need to provide audits to the Clearinghouse if expending over \$750,000 in federal funds as required in the OmniCircular. The OMB OmniCircular can be found on-line at www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars.



Detailed Budget Instructions

These instructions do not apply to Education Award Only Program (EAP) grants. Please see detailed budget instructions for EAPs following “Subtotal for Section III”.

Source of Match

In the “Source of Match” field that appears at the beginning of Sections I, II, and III, enter a brief description of the Source of Match, the amount, the match classification (Cash, In-kind, or Not Available) and Match Source (State/Local, Federal, Private, Other or Not Available). Be sure to define any non-CNCS acronyms the first time they are used.

Section I. Program Operating Costs

Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs, of the Budget Worksheet by entering the “Total Amount,” “CNCS Share,” and “Grantee Share” for Parts A-I, as follows:

A. Personnel Expenses

Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position separately and provide salary and percentage of effort as percentage of FTE devoted to this award. Each staff person’s role listed in the budget must be described in the application narrative and each staff person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS or Grantee share. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, do not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers. However, you may include the value of volunteer services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, or training of staff and AmeriCorps members.

B. Personnel Fringe Benefits

Under “Purpose/Description,” identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker’s Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, please list covered items separately and justify the high cost. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates, but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item.

C.1 Staff Travel

Describe the purpose for which program staff will travel. Provide a calculation that includes itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Reimbursement should not exceed the federal mileage rate unless a result of applicant policy and justified in the budget narrative. Only domestic travel is allowable.

Please itemize the costs. For example: Two staff members will attend the Annual AmeriCorps Symposium in Washington, DC.

2 staff X \$750 airfare + \$50 ground transportation + (1 day) X \$400 lodging + \$35 per diem = \$2,470 for Annual AmeriCorps Symposium.

It is required that a minimum of \$1,000 be included in this line item for travel for your staff and staff at your sites to attend CNCS or Commission sponsored technical assistance meetings. CNCS sponsors two to three such opportunities per year, including opportunities for new grantee orientation, CNCS cluster training, financial training, and the Points of Light National Conference on Volunteering and Service. Serve Illinois will require attendance at meetings throughout the grant period, including Program Director's trainings and other programmatic-related trainings or events. Your budget should reflect sufficient resources to cover travel to these trainings or events.

C. 2. Member Travel

Describe the purpose for which members will travel. Provide a calculation that includes itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other related expenses for members to travel outside their service location or between sites. Costs associated with local travel, such as bus passes to local sites, mileage reimbursement for use of car, etc., should be included in this budget category. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information.

Serve Illinois hosts a 'National Service Recognition Day' event for all streams of national service operating in Illinois. All successful applicants funded by this RFA are required to attend with their corps of AmeriCorps members. This event is held in mid-October in Springfield, Illinois. Your budget should reflect sufficient transportation costs to cover the travel of members and appropriate staff to this event.

D. Equipment

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of **\$5,000 or more per unit** (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Any items that do not meet this definition should be entered in E. Supplies below. Purchases of equipment are limited to 10% of the total CNCS funds requested. If applicable, show the unit cost and number of units you are requesting. Provide a brief justification for the purchase of the equipment under Item/Purpose.

E. Supplies

AmeriCorps members must wear an AmeriCorps logo on a daily basis – preferably clothing with the AmeriCorps logo. The item with the AmeriCorps logo is a required budget expense. Please include the cost of the item with the AmeriCorps logo in your budget or explain how your program will be providing the item to AmeriCorps members without using grant funds. Grantees may add the AmeriCorps logo to their own local program uniform items using federal funds. Please note that your program will be using the AmeriCorps logo in the budget description.

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including member service gear and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 or more. Except for safety equipment, grantees may only charge the cost of member service gear to the federal share if it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All safety gear may be charged to the federal share, regardless of whether it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All other service gear must be purchased with non-CNCS funds.

F. Contractual and Consultant Services



Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except training or evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Sections G. and H., below. There is not a maximum daily rate.

G. 1. Staff Training

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate.

G. 2. Member Training

Include the costs associated with member training to support them in carrying out their service activities. You may also use this section to request funds to support training in Life after AmeriCorps. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate.

H. Evaluation

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses. This cost does not include the daily/weekly gathering of data to assess progress toward meeting performance measures, but is a larger assessment of the impact your project is having on the community, as well as an assessment of the overall systems and project design. Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable.

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- Criminal history background checks for all members and for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, or stipend or similar payment from the grant (federal or non-federal share). Please include the cost for these checks for staff and members or explain how your program will be covering the cost in the budget narrative.
- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Utilities, telephone, internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff, and are not part of the organization's indirect cost allocation pool. If such expenses are budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Recognition costs for members. List each item and provide a justification in the budget narrative. Gifts and/or food in an entertainment/event setting are not allowable costs.
- Multi-state applicants: Indicate the number of subgrants and the average amount of subgrants. Indicate any match that you will require of your subgrants under the "grantee share" column in this category. Subgranted funds may only cover costs allowable under federal and AmeriCorps regulations and provisions.

Section II. Member Costs

Member Costs are identified as "Living Allowance" and "Member Support Costs." Your required match can be federal, state, local, or private sector funds.

A. Living Allowance

The narrative should clearly identify the number of members you are supporting by category (i.e., full-time, half-time, reduced-half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time) and the amount of living allowance

they will receive, allocating appropriate portions between the CNCS share (CNCS Share) and grantee share (match).

The minimum and maximum living allowance amounts are provided in the *Notice*.

In eGrants, enter the total number of members you are requesting in each category. Enter the average amount of the living allowance for each type of member. In addition, enter the number of members for which you are not requesting funds for a living allowance, but for which you are requesting education awards.

Minimum and Maximum Federal Share of Living Allowance

Term of Service	Minimum Number of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1700	\$12,530	\$25,060
One-year Half-time	900	n/a	\$13,265
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$9,950
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$6,635
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,420

Notes:

1. There is no requirement to pay a living allowance to less than full-time members, hence there is no minimum.
2. The amount of the maximum for less than full-time living allowance is rounded to the nearest dollar.
3. The calculation for the maximum federal share for less than full-time members who do receive a living allowance is pro-rated based on 85% of the proportion of the minimum full-time required hours, e.g., One Year Half-time = $900/1,700 \times \$11,400$, or \$6,035. Maximum federal share is $\$6,035 \times .85 = \$5,130$.

B. Member Support Costs

Consistent with the laws of Illinois, you must provide members with the benefits described below.

- **FICA.** Unless exempted by the IRS, all projects must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance, even when CNCS does not supply the living allowance. If exempted, please note in the narrative. In the first column next to FICA, indicate the number of members who will receive FICA. Calculate the FICA at 7.65% of the total amount of the living allowance.
- **Worker's Compensation.** Illinois law requires employers to provide workers' compensation coverage for their AmeriCorps members. Most employers buy commercial workers' compensation insurance. Other employers obtain the state's approval to self-insure. **No part of the workers' compensation insurance premium or benefit can be charged to the member.**
- **Health Care.** You must offer or make available health care benefits to full-time members in accordance with AmeriCorps requirements. Except as stated below, you may not pay health care benefits to less-than-full-time members with CNCS funds. You may choose to provide health care benefits to less-than-full-time members from other sources (i.e., non-federal) but the cost cannot be included in the budget. Less-than-full-time members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time (such as a full-time summer project) are eligible for health

care benefits. In your budget narrative, indicate the number of members who will receive health care benefits. CNCS will not pay for dependent coverage.

- **Unemployment Insurance and Other Member Support Costs.** AmeriCorps members are **not** entitled to unemployment benefits. CNCS has interpreted federal legislation to mean that there is no employer-employee relationship between members and programs. Illinois has chosen to agree with this interpretation and denies unemployment benefits to members; hence, programs are not required to pay unemployment taxes.

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

Definitions

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives CNCS funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Omni Circulars.

Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A, B, OR C)

Applicants choose one of three methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method, a federally approved indirect cost rate method, or a de minimis method. Regardless of the option chosen, the CNCS share of administrative costs is limited to 5% of the total CNCS funds **actually expended** under this grant. Do not create additional lines in this category.

A. CNCS-Fixed Percentage Method

Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option

The CNCS-fixed percentage rate method allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the CNCS-fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of the CNCS funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

1. To determine the maximum CNCS share for Section III: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as Corporation share. The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the 5% maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. Enter this amount as the CNCS share for Section III A.
2. To determine the Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both CNCS and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.
3. Enter the sum of the CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

Serve Illinois retains a 1% share of the 5% of federal funds available to programs for administrative and monitoring support. To calculate these fractional shares, within Section III of the subgrant budget, **one-fifth (20%) of the federal dollars budgeted for administrative costs is allocated to the commission's share and four-fifths (80%) of the federal dollars budgeted for administrative costs are allocated**

to the program's share. The allocation between commission and program shares would be calculated as follows:

$([\text{Section I}] + [\text{Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.20) = \text{Commission Share}$

$([\text{Section I}] + [\text{Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.80) = \text{Subgrantee Share}$

Commissions are not eligible to retain any portion of funds from fixed amount subgrants.

B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate

If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate, the rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs, **not to exceed** the 5% maximum payable by CNCS. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.

2. To determine the CNCS share: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the CNCS share of indirect costs.

Please note the 1% Commission retention in the text. There is no separate line item to show this calculation.

3. To determine the Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step b (the CNCS administrative share) from the amount calculated in step a (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

C. De Minimis Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs

If you have never had a federally negotiated indirect cost rate and receive less than \$35 million in direct federal funding, you may indefinitely use a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Additional information regarding what is included in MTDC and use of this option can be found at 2 CFR 200.414(f) and 200.68. If this option is elected, it must be used consistently across all federal awards.

Source of Funds

In the "Source of Funds" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your **entire match**. Define all acronyms the first time they are used. The total amount of Source of Match should equal the Grantee Share amount.

Note: the value of the Segal Education Awards that members earn for their service is not identified in the budget. Also, the childcare reimbursements provided to eligible full-time members is not included in

the budget.

Detailed Budget Instructions for Education Award Only Programs

These instructions apply only to applicants seeking funding for Education Award Only Programs.

Budget Section II. AmeriCorps Member Positions

Identify the number of Education Award members you are requesting by category (i.e., full-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time) and list under the column labeled **#w/o Allow** (without CNCS funded living allowance.) **Leave all other columns blank.** The total number of member service years (MSY) will **automatically calculate** at the bottom of the Member Positions chart. Amounts of fixed awards are based on the member service years which are calculated as follows:

Member	Positions Calculation	MSY
_____ Full-time (1700 hours)	(_____ members x 1.000)	= _____
_____ 1-Year Half-time (900 hours)	(_____ members x 0.500)	= _____
_____ Reduced half-time (675 hours)	(_____ members x 0.375)	= _____
_____ Quarter-time (450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.250)	= _____
_____ Minimum-time (300 hours)	(_____ members x 0.200)	= _____
Total MSY		_____

Under “Calculation,” you will enter the calculation for your grant request. Applicants may request up to \$800 per member service year (MSY). Display your calculation in the following format: Type the total amount requested in the “Total Amount” and “CNCS Share” columns. Leave the “Grantee Share” blank.

VII. Review, Authorize, and Submit

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting, by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances
- Certifications
- Verify
- Submit

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully (Attachment J). The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant’s Authorized Representative or his/her designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in your organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. A copy of the governing body’s authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant’s office.

Be sure to check your entire application to ensure that there are no errors before submitting it. eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission when you verify the application. If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant’s authorized representative, that person must log into his/her eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, his/her name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

Note: *Anyone within your organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account.* Individuals may establish an eGrants account by accessing this link: <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp> and selecting “Don’t have an eGrants account? Create an account.”

H. Continuation Requests

The following instructions for submitting a continuation request apply only to programs that are currently in their first or second year of operation within a grant cycle. If your program is currently in the final year of its grant cycle, you must apply using the application instructions for new and recompeting programs. In addition, if you are in year two or three of a cost-reimbursement grant cycle, you need to submit a new application to participate in the fixed-amount grant; you cannot continue your existing project period and switch from cost-reimbursement to fixed-amount. CNCS reserves the right to consider your continuation request if your fixed-amount application is not funded.

When to Submit Your Continuation Request:

All continuation applications are due by 5:00pm CST on Friday, December 4, 2015.

How to Submit Your Continuation Request:

- Click **Continuation/Renewal** on your eGrants home page. You will be shown a list of grants that are eligible to be continued. Select the grant you wish to continue. **Make sure you select the correct one. Do not start a new application.** The system will copy your most recently awarded application.
- Edit your continuation application as directed in the continuation request instructions below. When you have completed your work, click the **SUBMIT** button.

What to Include in Your Continuation Request:

I. Applicant Info and Application Info

Update the Applicant Info and Application Info Sections in eGrants if necessary. Note in the Continuation Changes field that you have updated the Applicant Info or Application Info Section(s).

Application Info

In the Application Info Section enter:

- Areas affected by your proposed program. Please include the two-letter abbreviation with both letters capitalized for each state where you plan to operate. Separate each two-letter state abbreviation with a comma. For city or county information, please follow each one with the two-letter capitalized state abbreviation.
- Requested project period start and end dates. The length of the project period is specified in the *Notice*.
- Enter Funding Type
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.
- The Application is Subject to Review by State Executive Order 12372 Process: This is pre-filled as “No, this is not applicable.”
- Indicate Yes or No if you are delinquent on any federal debt. If yes, send explanation as described in the CNCS instructions

- Leave the box for “Program Initiative” blank unless otherwise noted in the *Notice*.

In the Funding/Demographics Section enter:

- Other Revenue funds. Enter the amount of funds that your program uses to run the program that are not CNCS share or match.
- Number of Episodic Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers that will be participating in one day service projects that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.
- Number of Ongoing Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers that have an ongoing volunteer commitment that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.
- Percentage of MSYs who are opportunity youth
- Number of reported in O15 who are opportunity youth
- Number of reported in O17 who are opportunity youth

In the Program Information Section:

General Information: select either Yes or No from the drop down menu

- My organization has received an AmeriCorps State and National Grant. Organizations that have been a host site for AmeriCorps members but never had a direct grant relationship with either a State Commission or CNCS should answer No.
- Opt in to the National Service Registry. Applicants wishing to make information from their application to potential private sector funders can opt in during the application process.

2016 AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

Check any priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. In order to receive priority consideration, applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus, high quality program design, and outcomes.

Populations Served

Check the appropriate box (es) to identify the populations the proposed program will serve. If you do not plan to serve any of the listed populations, select "None of the above."

Grant Characteristics

Check any grant characteristics that apply to the proposed program:

Grant Characteristics:

AmeriCorps Identity/Co-branding Questions. Check all that apply.

- In the Multi-State Operating Sites Section (For applicants that are operating in more than one state): Please fill in the following information for your operating sites: organization name, addresss, city, and state, zip code +0000 (egrants will correct the last four digits to the correct numbers), amount of funding going to the operating site, number of proposed AmeriCorps members that will be located at the site.

II. Narrative (Narratives Section)

Your original application will appear in the Executive Summary and in the narrative sections Rationale and Approach/Program Design, Organizational Capability, Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, Evaluation Summary or Plan, Amendment Justification, Clarification Information, and Continuation Changes, as appropriate.

Do not enter continuation changes in the original narrative fields. If you are not proposing changes to your continuation request, simply leave your original narrative as it is, and enter No Changes in the Continuation Changes field.

Provide the following information in the Continuation Changes narrative field:

1. Identify whether this is a Year 2 or Year 3 continuation in the heading of this section.
2. Did the program enroll 100% of the slots in the last full year of program operation? If no, provide an explanation and describe the plan for improvement.
3. Did the program retain 100% of the members in the last full year of program operation? If no, provide an explanation, and describe the plan for improvement. CNCS recognizes retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model but expects all grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible.
4. Was the program 100% compliant with 30-day enrollment and exit requirements? If no, provide an explanation and the plan to ensure future compliance.
5. For national direct applicants: describe the manner and extent to which you consulted with the State Commission in the states in which you plan to operate (not applicable to Tribes or single state applications applying through state commissions.)
6. Are you proposing a change in operating sites or service locations? This includes expansion to new sites. If yes, describe these changes and provide a justification for the change. The justification should include the need that will be met at any new sites, the activities of the members, and organizational capacity to support new sites.
7. Are you proposing a change in program scope or design? If yes, describe the change and provide a justification.
8. Are you requesting an expansion (increase in members, increase in funding, and/or an increase in cost/MSY)? Please note that continuation requests for increases in funding are rarely approved and are considered against the criteria outlined in the *Notice* and subject to available funding.

Continuation applicants requesting expansions should not modify performance measures and the application budget to reflect the increase. Instead, please respond to the questions below. If your continuation request is approved, you will be invited to modify your performance measures and budget accordingly.

- a. What type of expansion is being requested (increase in members, increase in funding, and/or increase in cost per MSY)?
- b. What is the level of increase being requested?
- c. Provide a justification for the expansion. The justification should include an explanation of the problem/need that will be met, how or whether member activities will differ from those already included in the approved grant, and a description of the organizational capability to support the expansion, including the organizational staffing and experience to manage the expansion and ensure quality and compliant programming and member experience.

- d. Provide a detailed description of how the expansion would change the application budget and a dollar amount of the total increase. Include any additional staffing that would be added, changes to member training, criminal history checks, etc.
 - e. Provide a detailed description of how the expansion would change the application performance measures. Indicate how the expansion will impact program outcomes and make the program more effective.
9. Are you proposing other changes not captured above? If yes, describe these changes and provide a justification for them.

The page limit for the Continuation Changes field is 6 pages, as the pages print out from eGrants.

III. Performance Measures (Performance Measures Section)

Your performance measures are copied from your previous year's application into your continuation request. If you made changes to your program, such as adding or changing grant-funded activities, or requesting additional slots or MSYs, you may need to revise your performance measures. To revise performance measures, "View/Edit" the performance measures that copy over from your original application, or add new performance measures (see Attachment B for instructions). Note in the Continuation Changes field that you have updated your performance measures.

IV. Budget (Budget Section)

Your budget from the previous year's application is copied into your continuation request so you can make the necessary adjustments. Revise your detailed budget for the upcoming year. Incorporate any required CNCS increases, such as an increase to the member living allowance into your budget. The CNCS total share of the budget should generally not be increased. Continuation applicants requesting increase in funding should describe their request in the Continuation Changes section of the application and make modifications to the budget **ONLY** if this request is approved. CNCS expects that the Cost per MSY for continuation applicants will decrease or remain the same. Any proposed increase in Cost per MSY must be justified in the Continuation Changes field. This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum or if the increase is due to increased costs set by CNCS.

Source of Funds (Match)

In the "Source of Funds" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your **entire match**. Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

V. Increasing Grantee Overall Share of Total Budgeted Costs

Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24% for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter, are maintained. See 45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 for the specific regulations.